

CHAPTER 98  
WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING  
[Prior to 12/31/86, Conservation Commission[290] Ch 111]  
RESIDENT WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING

**571—98.1(481A) General.** Wild turkey may be taken during the spring season subject to the following rules:

**98.1(1) License.** All hunters must have in possession a spring wild turkey hunting license valid for the current year when hunting wild turkey. No one, while hunting wild turkey, shall carry or have in possession any license or transportation tag issued to another hunter. A hunter having a license valid for one of the spring turkey hunting periods may accompany, call for, or otherwise assist any other hunter who has a valid turkey hunting license for any of the spring hunting periods in any zone, except that the hunter doing the assisting may not shoot a turkey or carry a firearm or bow unless the hunter has a valid license with an unused tag for the current season and zone. If a turkey is taken, it must be tagged with the tag issued to the hunter who shot the turkey. Two types of licenses will be issued.

*a.* Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses will be issued by zone and period and will be valid in the designated zone and for the designated period only. No one shall apply for or obtain more than two combination shotgun-or-archery licenses. If two licenses are obtained, one must be for hunting period four in Zone 4. Hunters who obtain one or two combination shotgun-or-archery licenses, whether free or paid, may not apply for or obtain an archery-only license.

*b.* Archery-only licenses will be valid statewide and shall be valid during all hunting periods open for spring turkey hunting. No one may apply for or obtain more than two archery-only licenses. Hunters purchasing one or two archery-only licenses, whether free or paid, may not apply for or obtain a combination shotgun-or-archery license.

**98.1(2) Daily bag and possession limits.** Daily bag limit, one bearded (or male) wild turkey. Possession limit and season limit, one bearded (or male) wild turkey per license.

**98.1(3) Shooting hours.** Shooting hours shall be from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.

**571—98.2(481A) Method of take.**

**98.2(1) Permitted weapons.** Wild turkey may be taken in accordance with the type of license issued as follows:

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery license.* Wild turkey may be taken by shotgun or muzzle-loading shotgun not smaller than 20-gauge and shooting only shot sizes number 2 or 3 nontoxic shot or number 4, 5, 6, 7½, or 8 lead or nontoxic shot; and by bow and arrow as defined in paragraph 98.2(1)“b.” A person shall not have shotshells containing shot of any size other than number 2 or 3 nontoxic shot or number 4, 5, 6, 7½, or 8 lead or nontoxic shot on the person while hunting wild turkey.

*b. Archery-only license.* Only bows and arrows meeting the following criteria will be permitted for hunting wild turkey:

(1) Only longbows, flat bows, recurve bows, compound bows or any combination of these designs that are hand-held and at least 30 inches long will be permitted. The propulsive energy for launching an arrow must derive solely from the bending and recovery of two limbs of the bow.

(2) The bow must be hand-drawn and held at all parts of the drawing cycle by a single, uninterrupted pulling action using only the muscle power of the shooter's body until release. Release of the arrow must be by a conscious action of the shooter, either by relaxing tension of the fingers or triggering a hand-held release aid. [No portion of the bow's riser (handle) or any trough, track, channel or other device that attaches directly to the bow's riser shall contact, support or guide the arrow from a point rearward of the bow's brace height.]†

†Last sentence of 98.2(1)“b”(2) nullified by HJR 5 in the 2003 Session of the Eightieth General Assembly.

(3) The following are prohibited: Crossbows; any device with a gun-type stock; any device that holds the bowstring at partial or full draw without the shooter's muscle power; any device that derives the energy to propel the arrow from a hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical or similar device other than the mechanical advantage provided by eccentric wheels or cams where energy to propel the arrow comes from the pulling effort of the shooter.

(4) A hunting arrow must be at least 20 inches in length measured from the point of the broadhead to the rearward tip of the nock, have fletching attached to the aft end and weigh no less than 300 grains. No poison, drug or explosive device shall be attached to the arrow.

(5) A hunting broadhead must possess two or more fixed or movable sharp cutting edges that can be sharpened or replaced, be at least 7/8 inch wide at the widest point of the cutting edges, and weigh at least 70 grains.

(6) Blunthead arrows may also be used if they weigh at least 300 grains, are at least 20 inches in length measured from the point of the blunthead to the rearward tip of the nock, and have a minimum diameter at the head of 9/16 inch.

**98.2(2) *Prohibited devices.*** The use of live decoys, dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, aircraft, bait, crossbows, except as otherwise provided, and the use or aid of recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds is prohibited, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may hunt from any stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with the involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord.

**98.2(3) *Zones.*** Persons with a spring turkey hunting license may take wild turkey in designated areas in accordance with the type of license issued. Persons with an archery-only license may take wild turkey statewide. Persons with a combination shotgun-or-archery license may take wild turkey in one of four zones described as follows:

*a. Zone 1.* Zone 1 is all units of Stephens State Forest west of U.S. Highway 65 in Clarke and Lucas counties only.

*b. Zone 2.* Zone 2 is Shimek State Forest in Lee and Van Buren counties only.

*c. Zone 3.* Zone 3 is Yellow River State Forest in Allamakee county only.

*d. Zone 4.* Zone 4 is all of Iowa except for those areas described by Zones 1, 2 and 3.

**98.2(4) *Exceptions.*** Rescinded IAB 12/1/99, effective 1/5/00.

**98.2(5) *Hunting periods.*** Hunting periods will be established in accordance with the type of license issued.

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.* Consecutive hunting periods are 4, 5, 7, and 19 days, respectively, with the first hunting period beginning on the Monday closest to April 13.

*b. Archery-only licenses.* The hunting period shall be 35 days beginning on the Monday closest to April 13.

**571—98.3(481A) Procedures to obtain licenses.** All spring wild turkey hunting licenses will be sold or may be applied for using the electronic licensing system for Iowa (ELSI). Licenses and license applications may be purchased through ELSI license agents or by calling the ELSI telephone ordering system.

**98.3(1)** Spring wild turkey hunting licenses will be sold beginning December 15 through the last day of the hunting period for which the license is valid or until quotas (if any) are filled, whichever occurs first. No one may obtain more than one limited quota license.

**98.3(2)** License quotas. Separate quotas will be established for each license type.

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.* A limited number of combination shotgun-or-archery hunting licenses will be issued for each hunting period in Zones 1, 2 and 3. There shall be no limit on combination shotgun-or-archery licenses in any hunting period in Zone 4. The same quota shall apply to Zones 1, 2 and 3 in all four hunting periods. The maximum number of combination shotgun-or-archery licenses that will be issued in each zone for each hunting period is as follows:

- (1) Zone 1. 65.
- (2) Zone 2. 125.
- (3) Zone 3. 80.
- (4) Zone 4. No limit.

*b. Archery-only licenses.* The number of archery-only licenses shall not be limited.

**98.3(3)** Landowner-tenant licenses. An eligible landowner or tenant may obtain a free combination shotgun-or-archery license or a free archery-only license. Nonresident landowners are not eligible for free turkey hunting licenses.

*a. Free combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.* Free combination shotgun-or-archery licenses will be issued by hunting period and will be valid only on the farm unit of the landowner or tenant. One paid combination shotgun-or-archery license may be obtained in addition to the free license, but at least one of these licenses (paid or free) must be for hunting period four in Zone 4.

*b. Free archery-only licenses.* Free archery-only licenses will be valid for all hunting periods but only on the farm unit of the landowner or tenant.

**571—98.4(481A) Transportation tag.** A transportation tag bearing license number of licensee, year of issuance, and date of kill properly shown shall be visibly attached to the carcass of each wild turkey in such a manner that the tag cannot be removed without mutilating or destroying the tag before the carcass can be transported from the place of kill. The tag shall be proof of possession of the carcass by above-mentioned licensee.

**571—98.5(481A) Harvest reporting system.** A harvest report card will be attached to each transportation tag. Each hunter that bags a wild turkey must immediately fill out and sign the harvest report card after the transportation tag is attached to the turkey. The completed harvest report card must be taken to any ELSI license agent within seven days of tagging the turkey. The license agent will enter the harvest report information into the ELSI terminal and print out a harvest verification tag. The verification tag must be placed on the turkey and remain there until the turkey is processed for consumption. A wild turkey carcass or part of a carcass may not be taken to a locker plant for processing unless the proper verification tag is attached.

**571—98.6(481A) Eligibility for free landowner/tenant turkey licenses.**

**98.6(1)** *Who qualifies for a free turkey hunting license.* Owners or tenants of a farm unit, or a member of an owner's or tenant's family that resides with the owner or tenant, are eligible for free turkey hunting licenses. The owner or tenant does not have to reside on the farm unit but must be actively engaged in farming it. Nonresident landowners do not qualify. For purposes of obtaining a free turkey hunting license, all the land under the lawful control of a landowner and eligible family members or a tenant and eligible family members shall be considered as one farm unit, regardless of how that land is subdivided for agricultural or business purposes.

**98.6(2)** *Who qualifies as a tenant.* A "tenant" is a person other than the landowner who is actively engaged in the operation of the farm. The tenant may be a member of the landowner's family, including in some circumstances the landowner's spouse or child, or a third party who is not a family member. The tenant does not have to reside on the farm unit.

**98.6(3)** *What "actively engaged in farming" means.* Landowners and tenants are "actively engaged in farming" if they personally participate in decisions about farm operations and those decisions, along with external factors such as weather and market prices, determine their profit or loss for the products they produce. Tenants qualify if they farm land owned by another and pay rent in cash or in kind. A farm manager or other third party who operates a farm for a fee or a laborer who works on the farm for a wage and is not a family member does not qualify as a tenant.

**98.6(4)** *Landowners who qualify as active farmers.* These landowners:

- a. Are the sole operator of a farm unit (along with immediate family members), or
- b. Make all decisions about farm operations, but contract for custom farming or hire labor to do some or all of the work, or
- c. Participate annually in decisions about farm operations such as negotiations with federal farm agencies or negotiations about cropping practices on specific fields that are rented to a tenant, or
- d. Raise specialty crops from operations such as orchards, nurseries, or tree farms that do not necessarily produce annual income but require annual operating decisions about maintenance or improvements, or
- e. May have portions of the farm enrolled in a long-term land retirement program such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as long as other farm operations occur annually, or
- f. Place their entire cropland in the CRP or other long-term land retirement program with no other active farming operation occurring on the farm.

**98.6(5)** *Landowners who do not qualify.* These landowners:

- a. Use a farm manager or other third party to operate the farm, or
- b. Cash rent the entire farm to a tenant who is responsible for all farm operations including following preapproved operations plans.

**98.6(6)** *Where free licenses are valid.* A free license is valid only on that portion of the farm unit that is in a zone open to turkey hunting. "Farm unit" means all parcels of land that are operated as a unit for agricultural purposes and are under lawful control of the landowner or tenant. Individual parcels of land do not need to be adjacent to one another to be included in the farm unit. "Agricultural purposes" includes but is not limited to field crops, livestock, horticultural crops (e.g., from nurseries, orchards, truck farms, or Christmas tree plantations), and land managed for timber production.

**98.6(7)** *How many free licenses may be obtained.* The maximum number of free licenses for the spring turkey season is two per farm unit, one for the landowner (or family member) and one for the tenant (or family member). If there is no tenant, the landowner's family may obtain only one license. A tenant or the tenant's family is entitled to only one free license even if the tenant farms land for more than one landowner.

Rules 98.1(481A) to 98.6(481A) are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.48, 483A.1, and 483A.7.

**571—98.7 to 98.9** Reserved.

## NONRESIDENT WILD TURKEY SPRING HUNTING

**571—98.10(483A) General.** Wild turkey may be taken during the spring season subject to the following:

**98.10(1) License.** All hunters must have in possession a valid nonresident spring wild turkey hunting license, a valid nonresident small game hunting license, and show proof they have paid the current year's habitat fee when hunting wild turkey. No one, while hunting turkey, shall carry or have in possession any license or transportation tag issued to another hunter. Licenses will be issued by zone and period and will be valid in the designated zone and period only. No one shall obtain more than one nonresident spring wild turkey hunting license. Two types of licenses will be issued:

*a. Combination shotgun-or-archery license.* Shotguns, muzzleloading shotguns and archery equipment as defined in subrule 98.13(1) may be used.

*b. Muzzleloading shotgun-only license.* Only muzzleloading shotguns as defined in subrule 98.13(1) may be used.

**98.10(2) Seasons.** Bearded (or male) wild turkey may be taken only by the use of shotguns, muzzleloading shotguns, and bow and arrow during the first, third or fourth hunting periods as defined in 98.2(5), paragraph "a." No nonresident hunting licenses will be issued for the second hunting period.

**98.10(3) Daily, possession and season limits.** The daily bag limit is one bearded (or male) wild turkey; the possession and season limit is one bearded (or male) wild turkey.

**98.10(4) Shooting hours.** Shooting hours shall be from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day.

**571—98.11(483A) Zones open to hunting.** Licenses will be valid only in designated areas as follows:

1. Zone 1. Zone 1 is all units of Stephens State Forest in Clarke and Lucas counties west of U.S. Highway 65.

2. Zone 2. Zone 2 is the Shimek State Forest in Lee and Van Buren counties only.

3. Zone 3. Zone 3 is the Yellow River Forest in Allamakee county only.

4. Zone 4. Zone 4 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by Interstate Highway 80 and on the west by U.S. Highway 59, with the exception of the areas described as Zone 1 and Zone 2.

5. Zone 5. Zone 5 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by U.S. Highway 20 and on the east by U.S. Highway 59.

6. Zone 6. Zone 6 is that portion of Iowa lying east of U.S. Highway 63 and north of Interstate Highway 80, with the exception of that area described as Zone 3.

7. Zone 7. Zone 7 is that portion of Iowa bounded on the north by U.S. Highway 20, on the west by U.S. Highway 59, on the south by Interstate Highway 80, and on the east by U.S. Highway 63.

**571—98.12(483A) License quotas.** A limited number of wild turkey hunting licenses will be issued in each zone in each season as follows:

**98.12(1) *Combination shotgun-or-archery licenses.***

- a. Zone 1. Closed.
- b. Zone 2. Closed.
- c. Zone 3. Closed.
- d. Zone 4. 350.
- e. Zone 5. 100.
- f. Zone 6. 220.
- g. Zone 7. 46.

**98.12(2) *Muzzleloading shotgun-only licenses.*** 150 statewide. Hunters purchasing a muzzleloading shotgun license must declare a zone and hunt only in that zone.

**571—98.13(483A) Means and method of take.**

**98.13(1) *Permitted weapons.*** Wild turkey may be taken only with shotguns and muzzleloading shotguns not smaller than 20-gauge and shooting shot sizes 4, 5, 6, 7½, and 8 only; or with recurve, compound or longbows with broadhead or blunthead (minimum diameter 9/16 inch) arrows only. No person may have shotshells containing shot of any size other than 4, 5, 6, 7½, or 8 on their person while hunting wild turkey.

**98.13(2) *Prohibited devices.*** The use of live decoys, dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, aircraft, bait, crossbows, except as otherwise provided, and the use or aid of recorded or electronically amplified bird calls or sounds, or recorded or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls or sounds is prohibited, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may hunt from any stationary motor-driven land conveyance. "Paraplegic" means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with the involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord.

**571—98.14(483A) Application procedure.** Applications for nonresident spring wild turkey hunting licenses must be made through the electronic licensing system for Iowa (ELSI) telephone order system. Applications will be accepted from December 15 through the last Sunday in January. No one may submit more than one application during the application period. If applications have been sold in excess of the license quota for any license type, zone, or hunting period, a drawing will be held to determine which applicants receive licenses. Licenses or refunds of license fees will be mailed to applicants after the drawing is completed. License agent writing fees, department administrative fees and telephone order charges will not be refunded. If any license quota has not been filled, the excess licenses will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis through the telephone ordering system beginning the second Saturday after the close of the application period and lasting until the quota has been filled or the last day of the hunting period for which the license is valid, whichever occurs first. No one may obtain more than one nonresident spring wild turkey hunting license. Hunters may apply individually or as a group of up to 15 applicants. All members of a group will be accepted or rejected as a group in the drawing. If a group is rejected, members of that group may purchase licenses individually if excess licenses are available.

Each individual applicant that is unsuccessful in the drawing will be assigned one preference point for each consecutive year in which the individual applies and is unsuccessful. Preference points will not accrue in a year in which an applicant fails to apply, but the applicant will retain any preference points previously earned. Once an applicant receives a license, all preference points will be erased. Preference points will apply to any zone or hunting period for which a hunter applies.

The first license drawing each year will be made from the pool of applicants with the most preference points. If licenses are still available after the first drawing, subsequent drawings will be made from pools of applicants with successively fewer preference points and continue until the license quota is reached or all applicants have received licenses. Applicants who apply as a group will be included in a pool of applicants with the same number of preference points as that of the member of the group with the fewest preference points assigned.

**571—98.15(483A) Transportation tag.** A transportation tag bearing license number of licensee, year of issuance and date of kill properly shown shall be visibly attached to the carcass of each wild turkey in such a manner that the tag cannot be removed without mutilating or destroying the tag before carcass can be transported from the place of kill. The tag shall be proof of possession of the carcass by the licensee.

**571—98.16(481A) Harvest reporting system.** A harvest report card will be attached to each transportation tag. Each hunter that bags a wild turkey must immediately fill out and sign the harvest report card after the transportation tag is attached to the turkey. The completed harvest report card must be taken to any ELSI license agent within seven days of tagging the turkey or before leaving the state. The license agent will enter the harvest report information into the ELSI terminal and print out a harvest verification tag. The verification tag must be placed on the turkey and remain there until the turkey is processed for consumption. A wild turkey carcass or part of a carcass may not be taken to a locker plant for processing unless the proper verification tag is attached.

Rules 98.10(483A) to 98.15(483A) and 98.16(481A) are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.48, 483A.1 and 483A.7.

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